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SOME WAR LETTERS.*

ADMIRAL PORTER TO GENERAL SHERMAN.

SOME insight into the "no quarter" given by the irregular bands that attacked the colored camp at Milliken's Bend is given in this private letter of Admiral Porter to Gen. Sherman. The "Cincinnati" referred to was one of our gunboats, sunk by the batteries in Vicksburg.

"FLAG SHIP 'BLACK HAWK,' *June* 10, 1863.

"DEAR GENERAL:

"I received yours in relation to the guard on board the 'Cincinnati,' and feel quite satisfied that no harm will happen to her. The officer in the tug did not report matters right that night. I had her examined night before last to see if I could stop the holes in her, but the stench was so great in her magazine that the carpenter could not get down there. There are likely some dead bodies in her. The ground about her is too muddy to work on in getting the guns out just now, but it will soon dry up, and when she is high and dry I think it better to throw up some earth around her to protect her, and with the addition of some cotton bales the rebels will not be able to hurt her. I will watch her closely, and when we take Vicksburg we can soon launch her.

"We had quite an affair here the other day. The excitement you saw was owing to a gang of about 4,500 rebels attacking Milliken's Bend. The few troops there behaved well until overpowered by numbers, when they retreated to the water side under the protection of the 'Choctaw' and 'Lexington,' when those two vessels set the rebels to scampering, with severe loss to them and without getting a thing.

"They did not know there was any gunboat about. The rebels attacked Young's Point, where there were no troops; the gunboats were ready for them, and shelled them away in short order. The rebels have no artillery and seem to be a miserable set of fellows, judging from the specimens of killed I saw. There were about eighty rebels laid out in the camps and trenches, and a number lying in the fiel's killed by our shells. There were no wounded of any account; no quarter seemed to be given by either side.

"Pemberton sent over some women and children yesterday. They report the rebel soldiers as coming into their houses or caves and taking the food from the

* Continued from the March and other preceding numbers. These letters have hitherto been unpublished. They were furnished by Gen. Wm. T. Sherman to his friend Captain Byers for publication in the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

children. I sent word to the commanding officer at the picket station to let no more come. Half their deserters are spies; one that came into us jumped overboard on the way up and attempted to escape to shore. He was retaken. I have ordered the captains to shoot all who attempt to escape after they are recaptured.

"I received a letter from Captain Palmer, of the 'Hartford;' he says that Banks received another severe repulse, and that he will not take Port Hudson the way he is going to work, though he has 30,000 men there. In his first repulse he lost 2,000 in killed and wounded, and the rebels made a sortie on his centre and drove him back. He left a hole for them to get out off, but they declined taking advantage of the occasion.

"Hoping this rain will not interfere with your operations,

"I remain very truly yours,

"DAVID D. PORTER.

"GENERAL SHERMAN."